

Remarks/Arguments

Applicants respectfully request consideration of the subject application as amended herein. This Amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed December 22, 2010.

In this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 7-9, and 16 have been amended. It is respectfully submitted that the amendment does not add new matter.

Applicants reserve all rights with respect to the applicability of the Doctrine of equivalents.

The Office Action indicates that the drawings are objected to because in Figure 1 the viewing line A-A should be -B-B-. In Figure 1a, the viewing line A-A has been replaced with -B-B-. Applicants request removal of the objection to the drawings.

The Office Action indicates that the applicant has not filed a certified copy of the European PCT application. The certified copy of the European PCT application will be filed shortly.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

The Examiner has rejected claims 9, 16, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 9, as amended, depends from claim 8. The two bearings in claim 9 has proper antecedent basis.

Claim 16, as amended, includes “a rotor shaft” and “the rotor shaft.”

Regarding claim 17, support for this limitation can be found on page 8. Claim 16 includes the limitation “the axis of the rotor shaft being located at a y-position y_s of a y-axis and the rotor shaft having a radius r .” Thus, the relation between the tower in the z-axis, the rotor shaft defining an x-axis, and the axis of the rotor shaft being located at a y-position y_s of a y-axis and the rotor shaft having a radius r is clear. One of ordinary skill in the art having read the specification would understand that the y-position y_s and the radius r either have the same dimensional units or can be converted into the same dimensional units.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request removal of the rejections of claims 9, 16, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 5, 8-9 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Paul, (USPN 2,972,327, “Paul”).

Claim 1, as amended, reads as follows.

A bearing housing for accommodating a rotor shaft of a wind turbine, comprising:
a flange for connecting the bearing housing to a main frame of the wind turbine; the flange having a connecting surface to be attached to the main frame of the wind turbine, wherein at least parts of the connecting surface, when seen from the top of the bearing housing, would be located below the rotor shaft, wherein the connecting surface of the flange includes a curved surface that extends from a first end to a second end of the flange.

The Office Action indicates that Paul discloses a bearing housing (110) accommodating a rotor shaft (106); the housing comprises a flange (50) for attaching the housing to a main frame (14/16/24), the flange having, at least part of the connecting surface below the rotor shaft. Applicants respectfully disagree. The bearing 110 indicated with dashed lines in figure 1 does not include the rotary disc 50. The housing 100 also does not include the rotary disc 50.

Paul discloses a propelling and steering assembly for a boat. Concentric with and bearing rotatably upon the upper surface of the disc 36 is a relatively heavy rotary disc 50. (Paul, col. 2, lines 9-11).

In contrast to amended claim 1, Paul fails to disclose a flange having a connecting surface to be attached to the main frame of the wind turbine. Paul fails to disclose that a connecting surface of the rotary disc includes a curved surface that extends from a first end to a second end of the rotary disc because a rotary disc does not include a first end and a second end. Thus, Paul fails to disclose the limitations “the flange having a connecting surface to be attached to the main frame of the wind turbine” and “wherein the connecting surface of the flange includes a curved surface that extends from a first end to a second end of the flange.”

Therefore, Paul does not disclose or teach each and every limitation of amended claim 1. As such, amended claim 1 is not anticipated by Paul under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

It is submitted that dependent claims 5, 8, 9, and 11 are not anticipated by Paul under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) given that claims 5, 8, 9, and 11 depend from and include the limitations of independent claim 1.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected claims 2 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Paul in view of Trapp (USPN 3,386,242, “Trapp”).

Claims 2 and 5 depend from and include the limitations of independent claim 1 noted above. It is submitted that Trapp fails to cure the deficiencies of Paul noted above with respect to claim 1 and, therefore, claims 2 and 5 are patentable over the combination of cited references.

The Examiner has rejected claims 6, 7, 10, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Paul.

Claims 6, 7, 10, and 12 depend from and include the limitations of independent claim 1 noted above. It is submitted that the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art fails to cure the deficiencies of Paul noted above with respect to claim 1 and, therefore, claims 6, 7, 10, and 12 are patentable over the combination of cited references.

The Examiner has rejected claims 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Paul in view of Trapp in further view of Parkins (USPN 4,498,017, “Parkins”).

Independent claim 16, as amended, contains similar limitations but not identical compared to the limitations of claim 1. The Office Action indicates that Parkins discloses a wind turbine and Trapp discloses a shaft defining an x-axis, a tower defining a z-axis, and the axis of the shaft is located at a y-position.

It is respectfully submitted that Trapp and Parkins fail to cure the deficiencies of Paul for claim 1. Paul, Trapp, and Parkins, individually or in combination, fail to disclose the limitations “the flange having a connecting surface to be attached to the main frame of the wind turbine” and “wherein the connecting surface of the flange includes a curved surface that extends from a first end to a second end of the flange.”

For similar reasons, independent claim 16 and dependent claim 17 are patentable over the combination of cited references.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that in view of the amendments and discussion set forth herein, the applicable rejections have been overcome. Accordingly, the present and amended claims should be found to be in condition for allowance.

If a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Jeremy A. Schweigert at (408) 720-8300.

If there are any additional charges/credits, please charge/credit our deposit account no. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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